

**BEFORE HEARING COMMISSIONERS
FOR THE PALMERSTON NORTH CITY COUNCIL**

**I MUA NGĀ KAIKŌMIHANA WHAKAWĀ
MO TE KAUNIHERA O PAPAIOEA**

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of proposed Plan Change I: Increasing Housing
Supply and Choice to the Palmerston North District
Plan

JOINT WITNESS STATEMENT

Planning and Urban Design

Dated 21 August 2025

A. INTRODUCTION

1. This joint expert witness statement relates to proposed Plan Change I: Increasing Housing Supply and Choice (**PCI**) to the Palmerston North District Plan.
2. The experts attending the conference were:
 - (A) Sarah Jenkin (**SJ**) for Palmerston North City Council (**PNCC**) – attended for the duration of conferencing;
 - (B) Andrew Burns (**AB**) for PNCC – attended between 9am and 11am for conferencing on Issues 1 - 5; and
 - (C) Matthew Lindenberg (**ML**) for Kāinga Ora – attended for the duration of the conferencing.
3. The conference took place on 21 August 2025 via Teams.

B. AGREED AGENDA

4. The agenda for discussion is set out below in Annexure A.

C. CODE OF CONDUCT

5. This joint witness statement is prepared in accordance with section 9 of the Environment Court Practice Note 2023.
6. We confirm that we have read the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 and agree to abide by it.

D. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF CONFERENCING

7. The purpose of this expert conferencing was to identify, discuss, and highlight points of agreement and disagreement on matters raised by ML in his statement of evidence in relation to:
 - (A) How the assessment criteria are applied;
 - (B) Drafting of specific objectives, policies and standards;
 - (C) Notification clause in SUB-MRZ-R1; and

(D) The Stormwater Overlay.

E. AGREED ISSUES

8. Refer to Annexure A.

F. DISAGREEMENT AND REASONS

9. Refer to Annexure A.

Date: 21 August 2025



Sarah Jenkin



Andrew Burns (in relation to Issues 1 – 5)



Matthew Lindenberg

ANNEXURE A

Expert conferencing – Planning and Urban Design – SJ, AB and ML

Issue	Agreed position with reasons	Disagreements with reasons
<i>Spatial extent of the MRZ and application of the Council's assessment criteria</i>		
1. ML considers that it is not necessary that all four of PNCC's accessibility criteria in full should apply for a property to be in the MRZ spatial extent.		AB and SJ consider that all four accessibility criteria should apply in full to determine which properties are included in the MRZ, in order to meet the direction in Policy 5 of the NPS-UD. Council's approach was informed by the desire to encourage greater numbers of people to living in closer proximity to commercial activities and community services and reduce reliance on vehicle journeys and increases equity and choice through active mode access.
<i>MRZ-O2 – Built Development in the Medium Density Residential Zone</i>		
2. ML considers that the drafting of MRZ-O2 is too detailed and the content should be made into assessment criteria.	<p>ML, SJ and AB agree that MRZ-O2(j) can be deleted because this is already encompassed within MRZ-O2(i) with regard to climate change resilience and in MRZ-P10, which encourages energy efficient layouts etc.</p> <p>ML, SJ and AB agree that further amendments are not required to MRZ-O2 as the remaining clauses set out what the Council is trying to achieve for the built form for the MRZ and there is a line of sight between this objective and policies, rules and standards.</p>	
<i>SUB-MRZ-P1 – Subdivision design and layout</i>		

Issue	Agreed position with reasons	Disagreements with reasons
<p>3. ML considers clauses 2, 7 and 8 of this policy should be deleted as they are not relevant or necessary for the assessment of a subdivision consent.</p>	<p>SJ, AB and ML agree that clauses 2 and 3 of SUB-MRZ-P1 can be combined, to recognise that opportunities for water sensitive design are more likely to be achieved on larger sites.</p> <p>2. Incorporate water sensitive design;</p> <p>3. Manage stormwater effectively and efficiently, <u>including by considering opportunities to incorporate water sensitive design;</u></p> <p>SJ, AB and ML agree there should be a reference to CPTED principles and agree that only some of the principles would be relevant at the subdivision stage. SJ, AB and ML also agree that an applicant should demonstrate how the principle have been addressed, in order to ensure an appropriate consideration at the subdivision stage.</p> <p>7. <u>Demonstrate how</u> Are designed using crime prevention through environmental design principles <u>have been addressed;</u></p> <p>SJ, AB and ML agree that clause 8 of this policy can be amended to remove the remove the reference to achieving high quality landscape outcomes.</p> <p>8. Achieve high quality landscape outcomes, including Encouraging the retention and integration of mature trees and native vegetation that contribute positively to an area's visual amenity</p>	

Issue	Agreed position with reasons	Disagreements with reasons
MRZ-S2 – Height in Relation to Boundary		
4. ML considers that clause 1 of this standard should apply to the entirety of a site and not just to the first 2/3 as currently proposed, as the effects that the standard is trying to manage at the front of the site are the same effects that need to be managed at the rear of the site. ML considers the current standard drafting is less flexible.		AB and SJ disagree that the HIRB standard should be amended to remove the reduced HIRB applying to development in the rear of a site. AB and SJ consider the currently drafted HIRB standard sets an appropriate effects envelope for residential intensification.
MRZ-S8 -Outlook space (per unit)		
5. ML considers that the MDRS standard for outlook space for a primary bedroom, of 1m x 1m (as is applied to other habitable rooms in clause (c) in this standard), should apply in the MRZ, rather than the proposed standard of 3m x 3m (clause (b) in the standard).	ML, SJ and AB agree that no change is required to clause (a) of this standard, i.e. retain 6m x 4m outlook space for a main living room.	AB and SJ disagree that clause (b) should be amended to reduce the outlook space for a primary bedroom from 3m x 3m to 1m x 1m, to be the same as clause (c). This is because the 3m x 3m space achieves better outcomes for privacy, wellbeing and liveability, including daylight access than a 1m x 1m outlook space. This is informed by extensive testing of the equivalent standard in the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (2015).
MRZ-P11 – Effects of buildings and activities on infrastructure and existing lawfully established non-residential activities		
6. ML considers that clause 2 of this policy should be deleted as the NZECP 34:2001 applies regardless of whether it is incorporated by reference into		SJ disagrees that this reference should be deleted as it addresses the intersect between two resources, i.e. electricity distribution lines and new housing. The alternative would be to duplicate provisions from the Code of Practice.

Issue	Agreed position with reasons	Disagreements with reasons
Chapter 10A, and a plan change would be required if amendments were made to the Code		
MRZ-P7 – Development in the Stormwater Overlay and SUB-MRZ-P4 – Subdivision in the Stormwater Overlay		
7. If the Stormwater Overlay is retained, ML considers MRZ-P7 and SUB-MRZ-P4 should be redrafted to remove the reference to 'avoid' in favour of 'manage'.		<p>SJ disagrees with changing the intent of these policies from 'avoid, unless' to 'manage', because this potentially sends a signal to plan users that this natural hazard risk can always be managed. Sometimes consents will need to be declined. Amending MRZ-P7 to remove the reference to 'avoid, unless' would create a disconnect with MRZ-O4 (which seeks to avoid development unless...' and hence remove the 'line of sight' between the objective and policy.</p> <p>SJ is open to considering alternative drafting if the underlying purpose of the policy can still be achieved, i.e. development in the Stormwater Overlay may need to be declined because the effects cannot be mitigated appropriately.</p>